NEXTGEN Tourism

Skills for Tourism Business Succession

Course Curriculum

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Welcome to Part 4 of the Next GEN Tourism Curriculum

Phase 4 Financial Security & Post-Transfer Growth

This part supports learners to strengthen financial security, plan the transfer with confidence and protect customer continuity while growing the business after transition.

Modules in this part

Module 6: Financial Planning & Business Viability

Core topics

- Financial readiness
- Business valuation and price expectations
- Financial transition planning

Module 7: Keeping Customers & Growing the Business

Core topics

- Customer and brand continuity
- Digital transition
- Post-Transfer Growth

PART 4

PHASE 4

Phase 4

Financial Security and Post-Transfer Growth

Module 6

Financial Planning and Business Viability

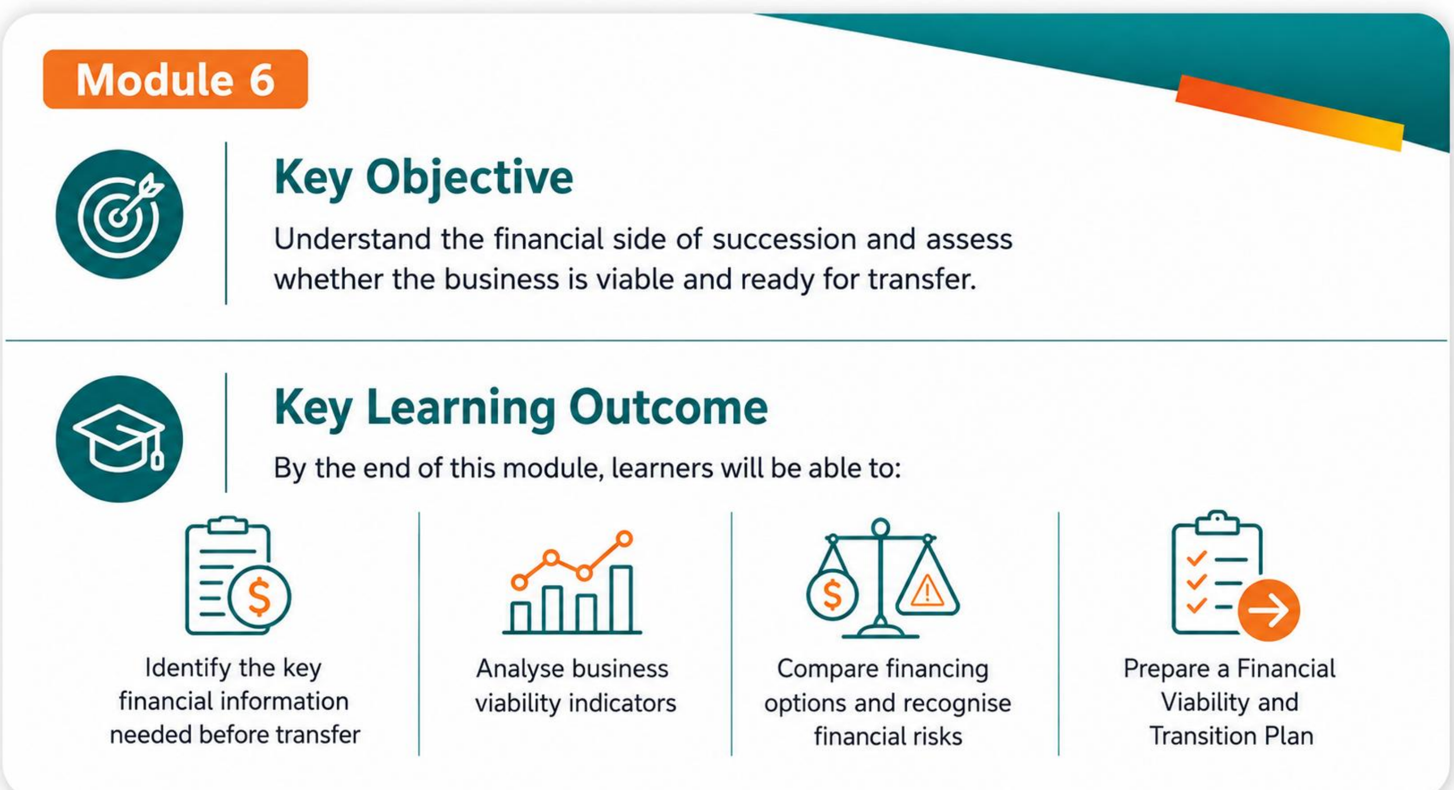
PHASE 4

Financial Security and Post-Transfer Growth

Module 6

Financial Planning and Business Viability

1. Module Descriptor			
Module Code	M6	**Indicative EQF Level**	EQF Level 4
Indicative ECTS Workload	0.5 ECTS	**Total Learner Workload**	12–15 hours
Delivery Mode	Hybrid, Online, Face to Face/On Campus, Distance Learning, Blended Learning, Work-Based Learning, Self-Paced Learning		
Target Learners	VET educators, trainers, tourism SME owners, successors, family business members, business advisors, legal/tax support actors, SME mentors and learning facilitators working with business continuity and succession.		



2. Module Rationale & Context

Purpose & Learning Aim

To help learners understand the financial side of succession and assess whether a tourism SME is financially viable, realistic to transfer, and prepared for future stability. By the end of the module, learners should be able to review basic financial readiness, understand valuation and financing needs, identify financial risks, and prepare a simple financial transition plan for a tourism SME.

Module Description

This module focuses on the financial side of succession. A tourism SME may have a clear successor, strong customer relationships and a good reputation, but the transition can still fail if the financial side is not realistic.

Learners explore whether the business is financially ready for transfer, **how valuation and price expectations can differ, how a successor might finance the takeover**, and what **risks** could affect cash flow and long-term viability.

The module does not turn learners into accountants or tax advisors. Instead, it helps them understand the key financial questions, prepare useful information, recognise warning signs and know when professional advice is needed. The aim is to support a transition that is financially realistic for both the outgoing owner and the successor.

3. Topics Covered

- **Financial Readiness Before Transition**
  Preparing a clear and transparent picture of the business's finances

- **Business Valuation and Realistic Expectations**
  Understanding business value, affordability and differing price expectations

- **Financing the Transfer**
  Comparing funding options and their impact on risk and control

- **Cash Flow, Costs and Financial Risks**
  Identifying the financial pressures that could affect business viability

- **Building a Financial Viability and Transition Plan**
  Bringing financial information, risks and funding needs into one plan

4. Learning Outcomes

By the end of this module, learners will be able to:

- Explain the role of financial planning in tourism SME succession.
- Identify the key financial information needed before a business is transferred.
- Analyse basic indicators of business viability, including turnover, profitability, debt, liquidity, cash flow, working capital and seasonality.
- Compare common financing options available to support succession and ownership transfer.
- Recognise financial risks that may affect the transfer, including valuation gaps, debt burden, working capital requirements and unexpected costs.
- Prepare a simple Financial Viability and Transition Plan for a tourism SME.

5. Competence Framework Alignment

Framework	Competences Addressed (Knowledge, Skills, Responsibility & Autonomy)
Understand financial readiness for succession.	**Knowledge**: Understand which financial information must be available before transfer. **Skills**: Identify missing or unclear financial information.
Assess business viability.	**Knowledge**: Understand basic indicators such as turnover, profit, debt, liquidity, cash flow and profitability. **Skills**: Interpret simple financial information and identify warning signs.
Understand valuation and financing options.	**Knowledge**: Understand that business value, purchase price and financing are connected but not the same. **Skills**: Compare financing options and identify where expert advice is needed.
Recognise financial risks in transition.	**Knowledge**: Understand risks linked to seasonality, debt, investment needs, cost increases and owner dependency. **Skills**: Identify financial risks and propose basic mitigation actions.
Plan for financial continuity.	**Knowledge**: Understand that financial planning should support both the outgoing owner and the successor. **Skills**: Prepare a simple financial transition plan with priorities, support needs and next steps.

6. Module Structure & Topics

Topic 1: Financial Readiness Before Transition

Keywords: Financial readiness, accounts, turnover, profit, debt, liquidity, cash flow, profitability, transparency, financial records, successor information.

Overview: This Topic introduces what financial readiness means in a tourism SME succession.

Before a business is transferred, the successor needs a clear picture of the financial situation. This includes income, costs, debts, cash flow, taxes, assets, liabilities, seasonal patterns and investment needs. If this information is missing, unclear or outdated, the successor may take on risks they do not understand.

Financial readiness is also important for the current owner. It helps them understand what the business can realistically provide after transfer, whether through a sale price, staged payment, retirement income or continued involvement.

Learners explore the basic financial information that should be prepared and handed over. The Succession Ready manual lists key figures such as turnover, profit, debt, liquidity, profitability, market position and market development as important information for assessing financial stability and future viability.

What is Covered

1. What financial readiness means
2. Why transparent financial information matters
3. Turnover, profit, debt, liquidity and profitability
4. Cash flow and seasonal income patterns
5. Assets, liabilities and commitments
6. Financial records and documentation
7. Owner income versus business profit
8. What the successor needs to understand before taking over
9. When accountant or financial advisor support is needed

Aim: Learners will identify the key financial information that should be prepared and reviewed before a tourism SME is transferred.

Topic 2: Business Valuation and Realistic Expectations

Keywords: Business valuation, price, value, goodwill, assets, profit, EBITDA, market value, owner expectations, successor affordability, external advice.

Overview: This Topic helps learners understand why valuation is often one of the most sensitive parts of succession.

The current owner may see the business as their life's work and may expect a price that reflects years of effort, emotional value and future retirement needs. The successor or buyer, however, must consider whether the business can generate enough income to repay financing and still remain viable.

Learners are introduced to the difference between business value, asking price and affordability. They do not need to calculate a full valuation, but they should understand what affects value and why external advice is often needed.

The Succession Ready manual notes that valuation may be controversial because there is no single objective company value, and that the appropriate method depends on factors such as industry, legal form and size of business.

What is Covered

1. Difference between value, price and affordability
2. Why owner and successor expectations may differ
3. Common valuation factors: assets, profit, debt, goodwill, customer base and market position
4. Tourism-specific factors: seasonality, reputation, location, licenses, staff, destination strength and owner dependency
5. Why external valuation advice may be useful
6. How valuation affects financing and transition planning
7. Emotional value versus financial reality

Aim: Learners will explain the main factors that influence tourism SME valuation, recognise why owner and successor expectations may differ, and identify when external valuation advice is needed.

Topic 3: Financing the Transfer

Keywords: Successor finance, equity, debt, bank loan, seller finance, staged payment, subsidies, grants, investors, working capital, repayment capacity.

Overview: This Topic explores how a successor may finance the takeover of a tourism SME. Most successors cannot simply pay for a business from personal savings. Financing may include a mix of own funds, family support, bank loans, staged payments, seller finance, investors, employee buyout arrangements or public support schemes. Each option has different effects on control, risk, repayment pressure and future flexibility.

Learners consider how financing choices affect the business after transfer. A business that looks successful may still become unstable if the successor takes on too much debt or does not have enough working capital.

The Succession Ready manual identifies equity, debt financing and subsidies as common succession funding sources, and stresses that the best financing option depends on the needs and situation of the business and successor.

What is Covered

1. Common successor financing options
2. Own funds, family finance and equity
3. Bank loans and debt finance
4. Seller finance and staged payments
5. Employee or team takeover
6. Investors and partnerships
7. Grants, subsidies and public support
8. Working capital needs after transfer
9. Repayment pressure and debt capacity
10. How financing affects ownership and control

Aim: Learners will compare common financing options and identify which questions a successor should ask before choosing a financing route.

Topic 4: Cash Flow, Costs and Financial Risks

Keywords: Cash flow, working capital, cost structure, debt repayments, seasonality, risk management, break-even, operating costs, unexpected costs, financial stress.

Overview: This Topic focuses on whether the business can stay financially stable during and after the transition.

Tourism SMEs often face seasonal income, high fixed costs, staffing challenges, changing visitor demand and unexpected disruptions. A successor may also face new costs, such as loan repayments, legal fees, advisory fees, renovation needs, digital upgrades or sustainability investments.

Learners explore how to identify financial pressure points and risks. They also look at how cost structures may need to be reviewed before transfer.

The Succession Ready manual explains that financing options affect repayment terms, liability and costs, and that cost structures may need to be adjusted so that the business remains sustainable and profitable under the successor's financing plan.

What is Covered

1. Cash flow and why profit is not the same as cash
2. Seasonal cash flow in tourism SMEs
3. Working capital needs
4. Fixed and variable costs
5. Debt repayments and interest
6. Legal, tax, valuation and advisory costs
7. Digital, sustainability or renovation investment needs
8. Financial risks caused by owner dependency
9. Cost structure review
10. Simple financial risk register
11. Peak-season and off-season cash flow planning

Aim: Learners will identify financial risks and cash flow pressures that could affect business viability during and after transition.

Topic 5: Building a Financial Viability and Transition Plan

Keywords: Financial transition plan, financing concept, financial forecast, risk register, advisor questions, bank preparation, business case, transition budget.

Overview: This Topic brings the module together by helping learners prepare a simple financial transition plan.

The plan should not be a complex accounting document. It should help the owner and successor understand what financial information is available, what is still missing, what the business may be worth, how the transfer could be financed, what risks exist and what expert support is needed.

Learners prepare a basic plan that can be used for discussion with accountants, banks, tax advisors, family members, successors or business support organisations.

The Succession Ready manual describes the financing concept as an important document for succession because it supports negotiations with banks and investors and helps minimise financial risks.

What is Covered

1. Financial information checklist
2. Initial valuation questions
3. Funding needs and possible sources
4. Transition cost estimate
5. Cash flow and repayment considerations
6. Financial risk register
7. Advisor question list
8. Priorities before transfer
9. Preparing for Module 7: customers, brand and post-transfer growth

Aim: Learners will prepare a simple Financial Viability and Transition Plan with financial information, risks, funding questions, advisor needs and practical next steps.

Module 6
Development Framework

From Module Overview to Applied Delivery

This section outlines how **Module 6** can be delivered in practice. It introduces suggested learning activities, assessment approach, recommended time allocation and supporting resources that will help learners apply their knowledge in real tourism business contexts.

In this section

- Practical Learning Exercises
- Assessment
- Suggested Schedule
- Resources & Learning Materials

Understanding Module 6 → Developing & Delivering

1. Practical Learning Exercises

1. **Financial Readiness Checklist**: Learners identify which financial information is available, missing or unclear.
2. **Value vs Price Discussion**: Learners compare owner expectations and successor affordability in a tourism SME case.
3. **Financing Options Comparison**: Learners compare equity, bank loan, seller finance, staged payment, investor support and subsidies.
4. **Tourism Cash Flow Risk Exercise**: Learners identify seasonal cash flow risks and possible mitigation actions.
5. **Financial Risk Register**: Learners list key financial risks, likelihood, impact and prevention actions.

2. Work-Based Learning Task

Learners apply the module to a real or realistic tourism SME. They may use their own business, a local business, or a case study.

Learners answer:

- What financial information is available and what is missing?
- What are the main sources of income and cost?
- How does seasonality affect cash flow?
- What debts, liabilities or investment needs could affect transition?
- What factors may influence business value?
- How could the successor finance the transfer?
- What financial risks should be discussed before transfer?
- What three actions would improve financial readiness?

3. Case Studies

Case studies should reflect realistic tourism SME situations and support practical discussion.

Case Study	Focus Area	Example Learning Themes
Family Guesthouse with Unclear Accounts	Financial readiness	Missing records, owner income, cash flow clarity, successor confidence, accountant support
Seasonal Adventure Tourism Business	Cash flow and risk	Seasonal income, staffing costs, equipment investment, working capital, debt capacity
Small Hotel Preparing for Sale	Valuation and buyer readiness	Valuation expectations, due diligence, market position, documentation, advisory support
Restaurant Transfer with Seller Finance	Financing the transfer	Staged payments, seller finance, repayment capacity, owner security, successor affordability

4. Assessment

Assessment Method	Description & Evidence
Short written reflection	Learners explain why financial planning is important before a tourism SME is transferred. **Evidence:** Short reflection using a tourism SME example.
Financial readiness checklist	Learners identify which financial information is available, missing or unclear. **Evidence:** Completed checklist with notes on next steps.
Financing options comparison	Learners compare possible ways to finance a transfer. **Evidence:** Completed comparison table showing benefits, risks and support needs.
Financial risk register	Learners identify financial risks and propose mitigation actions. **Evidence:** Completed risk register covering cash flow, debt, seasonality, valuation and transition costs.
Work-based learning task	Learners apply the module to a real or simulated tourism SME. **Evidence:** Financial Viability Snapshot or Financial Viability and Transition Plan.

5. Suggested Schedule

Total: 12–15 learning hours

Activity	Hours
Facilitated teaching/workshop	3
Group exercises and case studies	2
Independent reading/reflection	2
Work-based learning task	3–5
Assessment preparation/completion	2-3
Total Hours	**12 - 15**

6. Expected Module Learning Outcome

By the end of this module, learners will produce a **Financial Viability and Transition Plan** for a tourism SME. This will outline key financial information, financial readiness gaps, valuation considerations, possible financing options, cash flow and transition risks, advisor questions, and three practical actions to improve financial preparedness before transfer.

7. Resources & Learning Materials

Financial readiness and cash flow

- **Business.gov.au – Financial Tools and Templates**: https://business.gov.au/finance/financial-tools-and-templates
- **Business.gov.au – Cash Flow Statement**: https://business.gov.au/finance/cash-flow/set-up-a-cash-flow-statement

Valuation and due diligence

- **BDC – Business Valuation Guide**: https://www.bdc.ca/en/articles-tools/start-buy-business/buy-business/how-value-business-youd-like-acquire

7. Resources & Learning Materials

Financial planning, due diligence and valuation tools

- **Profit and Loss Statement Template:** https://business.gov.au/finance/financial-tools-and-templates/set-up-a-profit-and-loss-statement
- **Balance Sheet Template:** https://business.gov.au/finance/financial-tools-and-templates/set-up-a-balance-sheet
- **Business Budget Template:** https://business.gov.au/finance/financial-tools-and-templates/create-a-budget
- **Overall Review Your Financial Health:** https://business.gov.au/finance/yearly-financial-tasks/review-your-financial-health
- **BDC Due Diligence Checklist:** https://www.bdc.ca/en/articles-tools/entrepreneur-toolkit/templates-business-guides/due-diligence-when-buying-business-checklist
- **BDC Value versus Price Guidance:** https://www.bdc.ca/en/articles-tools/blog/value-vs-price-understanding-difference-buying-selling-business
- **BDC Business Financing & Loan Calculator:** https://www.bdc.ca/en/articles-tools/entrepreneur-toolkit/financial-tools/business-loan-calculator

Phase 4

Financial Security and Post-Transfer Growth

Module 7

Keeping Customers and Growing the Business

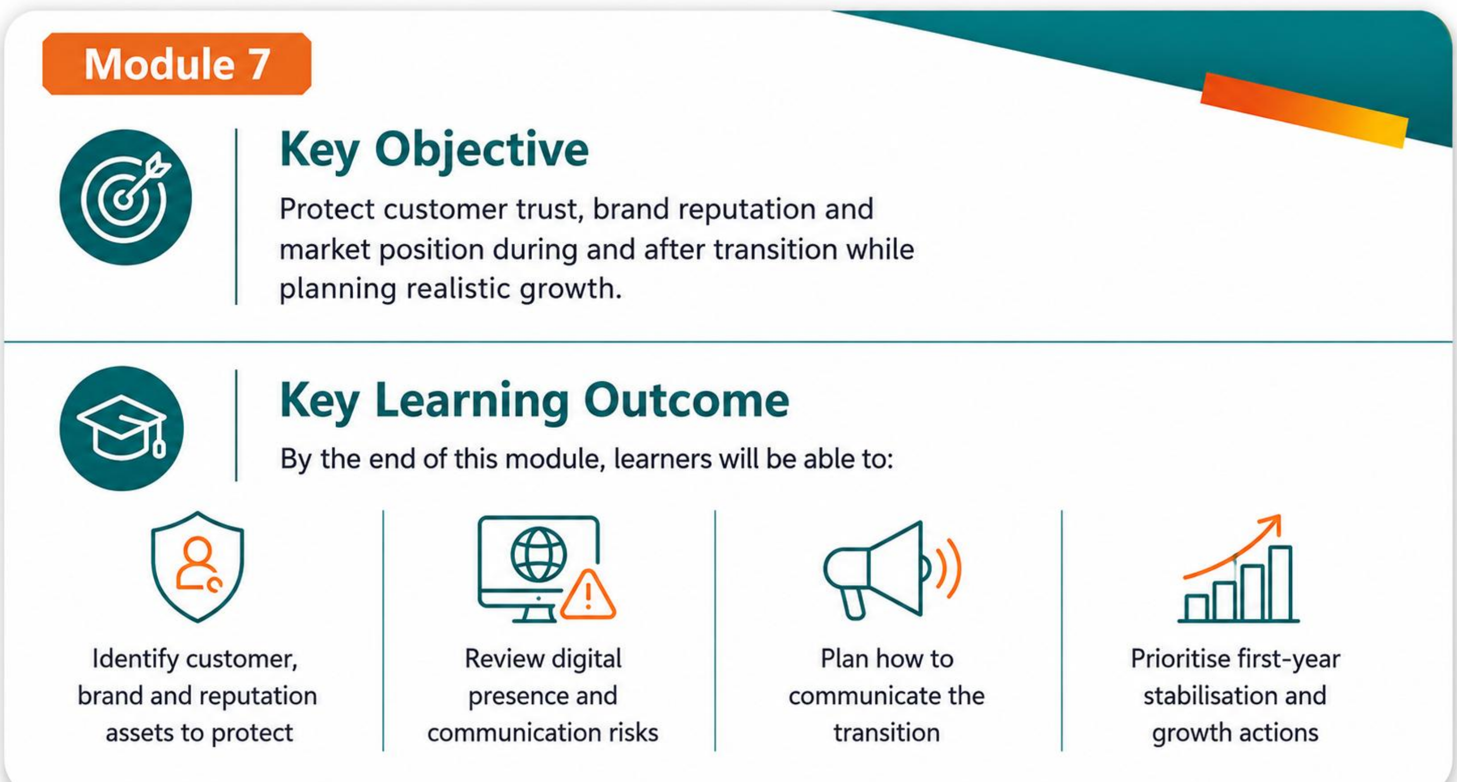
PHASE 4

Financial Security and Post-Transfer Growth

Module 7

Keeping Customers and Growing the Business

1. Module Descriptor			
Module Code	M7	**Indicative EQF Level**	EQF Level 5
Indicative ECTS Workload	0.5 ECTS	**Total Learner Workload**	12–15 hours
Delivery Mode	Hybrid, Online, Face to Face/On Campus, Distance Learning, Blended Learning, Work-Based Learning, Self-Paced Learning		
Target Learners	VET educators, trainers, tourism SME owners, successors, family business members, business advisors, legal/tax support actors, SME mentors and learning facilitators working with business continuity and succession.		



2. Module Rationale & Context

Purpose & Learning Aim

To help learners protect customer trust, brand reputation and market position during and after a tourism SME transition, while planning realistic growth and stabilisation after transfer. By the end of the module, learners should be able to identify what customers value, plan how to communicate the transition, protect the business's brand and digital presence, and prepare a simple first-year stabilisation and growth plan.

Module Description

This module focuses on **customers, brand, reputation and growth during and after a tourism SME transition.** A business may complete the legal, financial and leadership transfer, but still face problems if customers, staff, suppliers or destination partners lose confidence in the business.

Learners explore what customers value, what should stay recognisable after transition, and what can be updated or improved. The module also looks at **digital presence, booking platforms, reviews, customer communication and online visibility**.

The module helps learners plan the first year after transfer, including **customer retention, reputation management, digital continuity, communication of change and realistic growth opportunities**. It shows that successful transition means balancing continuity with careful renewal.

3. Topics Covered

1. **Customer and Brand Continuity**
   Protecting the identity, service and trust customers already value

2. **Communicating the Transition**
   Reassuring customers and stakeholders through clear transition messages

3. **Digital Presence and Platform Continuity**
   Securing the digital assets and platforms essential to business continuity

4. **First-Year Stabilisation After Transfer**
   Maintaining stability while the successor builds confidence and credibility

5. **Post-Transfer Growth and Future Competitiveness**
   Identifying realistic growth opportunities without losing the business's identity

3. Learning Outcomes

By the end of this module, learners will be able to:

1. Explain why customer trust and brand continuity are important during tourism SME succession.
2. Identify the key customer, brand and reputation assets that should be protected during transition.
3. Analyse digital presence, booking channels, reviews and customer communication risks linked to transfer.
4. Plan how to communicate ownership or leadership change to customers and stakeholders.
5. Evaluate and prioritise realistic post-transfer growth opportunities using customer value, cost, risk, market potential and timing.
6. Prepare a Customer Continuity and First-Year Growth Plan.

4. Competence Framework Alignment

Framework	Competences Addressed (Knowledge, Skills, Responsibility & Autonomy)
Protect customer and brand continuity.	**Knowledge:** Understand why customers may feel uncertain during transition. **Skills:** Identify what should stay recognisable in the brand, service and customer experience
Manage digital presence during transition.	**Knowledge:** Understand how websites, reviews, booking platforms and social media affect customer trust. **Skills:** Review digital channels and identify transition risks or updates needed.
Communicate change clearly.	**Knowledge:** Understand why timing, tone and audience matter. **Skills:** Prepare simple messages for customers, staff, suppliers and partners.
Support reputation and market position.	**Knowledge:** Understand how reviews, destination relationships and service quality influence reputation. **Skills:** Recommend actions to protect trust and visibility after transfer.
Plan stabilisation and growth after transfer.	**Knowledge:** Understand that growth should follow stability. **Skills:** Prepare a first-year plan with customer, digital, brand and growth priorities.

5. Module Structure & Topics

Topic 1: Customer and Brand Continuity

Keywords: Customer trust, brand continuity, reputation, loyalty, customer experience, business identity, service promise, values, local character.

Overview: This Topic helps learners understand what customers value and what should be protected during transition.

Tourism SMEs often have loyal customers because of personal service, family history, local identity, trusted staff, quality standards or a special atmosphere. When ownership or leadership changes, customers may worry that the experience will change too much.

Not everything needs to stay the same. A successor may need to update the business, modernise the offer or reach new customer groups. However, change should be handled carefully so that the business does not lose the trust and identity that made it successful.

Learners explore how to identify the core brand elements that should remain recognisable, such as service quality, values, tone of communication, customer relationships, local story and destination connection.

What is Covered

1. What customers value in tourism SMEs
2. Brand identity and business "personality"
3. Customer loyalty and repeat visitors
4. What should stay consistent after transition
5. What can be updated or improved
6. Risks of changing too much too quickly
7. Protecting service quality and customer experience
8. Linking brand continuity to successor credibility

Aim: Learners will identify the customer and brand assets that should be protected during and after transition.

Topic 2: Communicating the Transition

Keywords: Transition communication, ownership change, leadership change, customer message, stakeholder message, trust, transparency, timing, communication channels.

Overview: This Topic focuses on how to communicate the transition to customers and stakeholders.

Ownership or leadership change does not always need to be announced widely at once. However, key people should not find out through rumours, sudden changes or confusing messages. Customers, staff, suppliers, booking partners and destination actors need clear information at the right time.

Good transition communication should reassure people. It should explain what is changing, what is staying the same, who the new contact person is, and why customers can continue to trust the business.

Learners explore how to create simple messages for different audiences. The tone should be honest, positive and appropriate to the size and personality of the business.

What is Covered

1. Who needs to know about the transition
2. What customers should be told
3. What suppliers, partners and destination actors should know
4. Timing of communication
5. Internal versus external communication
6. Announcing the successor or new owner
7. Explaining continuity and change
8. Avoiding confusion or mixed messages
9. Communication channels: email, website, social media, booking platforms, in-person contact

Aim: Learners will prepare simple transition messages for customers and stakeholders.

Topic 3: Digital Presence and Platform Continuity

Keywords: Digital presence, website, booking systems, online reviews, Google Business Profile, Tripadvisor, Booking.com, social media, customer database, passwords, platform ownership.

Overview: This Topic helps learners review the digital side of transition.
Many tourism SMEs depend on digital visibility. Customers may find the business through search engines, booking platforms, review sites, social media, destination websites or email marketing. If these channels are not transferred or updated correctly, the business may lose bookings, reviews, customer trust or online visibility.

Learners explore what digital assets need to be reviewed before and after transfer. This includes website access, domain names, passwords, social media accounts, Google Business Profile, booking platforms, review platforms, customer databases, image libraries and email accounts.

Digital transition is not only technical. It also affects reputation and customer confidence. Outdated information, wrong contact details, lost access to accounts or unmanaged reviews can create immediate problems for the successor.

What is Covered

1. Website and domain ownership
2. Social media account access
3. Google Business Profile and online listings
4. Booking platforms and OTA accounts
5. Review platforms and reputation management
6. Customer databases and email lists
7. Photos, videos and brand content
8. Passwords and administrator rights
9. Data protection and customer consent when transferring customer databases
10. Updating opening hours, contact details and ownership information
11. Digital handover checklist

Aim: Learners will identify digital assets and platform risks that must be managed during tourism SME transition.

Topic 4: First-Year Stabilisation After Transfer

Keywords: First 100 days, first year, stabilisation, customer feedback, staff confidence, service quality, monitoring, early risks, transition review.

Overview: This Topic focuses on the first year after transition.
The first year is often a sensitive period. The successor may want to introduce improvements, but customers and staff may still be adjusting. Too much change too quickly can create uncertainty. Too little change may delay important renewal.

Learners explore how to create a stabilisation plan for the first 3, 6 and 12 months. The plan should protect customer experience, maintain service quality, monitor reviews, support staff, communicate clearly and track business performance.

The goal is to make sure the business remains stable while the successor builds confidence and starts to shape the future direction.

What is Covered

1. First 100 days after leadership or ownership transfer
2. What to monitor in the first year
3. Customer feedback and online reviews
4. Staff feedback and team stability
5. Booking levels and customer retention
6. Service quality and complaints
7. Supplier and partner continuity
8. Early warning signs of instability
9. Review meetings with mentor or outgoing owner
10. Balancing continuity and change

Aim: Learners will prepare a first-year stabilisation plan that protects customers, reputation and business continuity.

Topic 5: Post-Transfer Growth and Future Competitiveness

Keywords: Growth, innovation, product development, new markets, partnerships, digital marketing, customer segments, destination cooperation, competitiveness.

Overview: This Topic helps learners think about growth after the business has stabilised. Succession can create an opportunity for renewal. A successor may bring new ideas, digital skills, sustainability priorities, new networks or new customer insights. However, growth should be realistic and linked to the business's capacity, finances, staff and destination context.

Learners explore possible growth areas such as new customer groups, off-season offers, partnerships, improved digital marketing, updated experiences, sustainability-led products or stronger destination cooperation.

The Topic also reminds learners that growth should not damage what customers already value. Successful post-transfer growth usually combines continuity with careful innovation.

What is Covered

1. Growth after stability
2. New customer segments
3. Off-season development
4. Product and experience innovation
5. Partnerships with local businesses or destination organisations
6. Digital marketing and online visibility
7. Customer data and feedback
8. Sustainability-linked growth opportunities
9. Managing growth risks
10. Keeping the business identity while developing it

Aim: Learners will identify realistic growth opportunities that support long-term competitiveness after transition.

Module 7
Development Framework

From Module Overview to Applied Delivery

This section outlines how **Module 7** can be delivered in practice. It introduces suggested learning activities, assessment approach, recommended time allocation and supporting resources that will help learners apply their knowledge in real tourism business contexts.

❖ In this section

Practical Learning Exercises

Assessment

Suggested Schedule

Resources & Learning Materials

Understanding Module 7 → **Developing & Delivering**

1. Practical Learning Exercises

1. **Customer Continuity Map**: Learners identify loyal customer groups, what they value, and what should stay consistent after transition.
2. **Transition Message Exercise**: Learners write short messages for customers, staff, suppliers or destination partners explaining the transition.
3. **Digital Presence Check**: Learners review key digital assets such as website, social media, booking channels, review platforms and customer databases.
4. **First 100 Days Plan**: Learners create a simple plan for the first three months after the successor takes over.
5. **Growth Opportunity Prioritisation**: Learners identify possible growth ideas and rank them by impact, cost, risk and timing.

2. Work-Based Learning Task

Learners apply the module to a real or realistic tourism SME. They may use their own business, a local business, or a case study.

Learners answer:

- Who are the most important customer groups?
- What do customers value most about the business?
- What brand elements should stay recognisable after transition?
- What digital channels, reviews and booking systems need to be checked or transferred?
- How should the transition be communicated?
- What risks could affect customer trust or reputation?
- What should be prioritised in the first 3, 6 and 12 months?
- What are three realistic growth opportunities after stabilisation?

3. Case Studies

Case studies should reflect realistic tourism SME situations and support practical discussion.

Case Study	Focus Area	Example Learning Themes
Family Guesthouse with Loyal Repeat Guests	Customer and brand continuity	Customer trust, family identity, service consistency, transition communication
Small Hotel with Strong Online Reviews	Digital presence and reputation	Google Business Profile, review platforms, booking channels, customer confidence
Adventure Tourism Company After Founder Exit	First-year stabilisation	Safety reputation, staff confidence, supplier relationships, customer messaging
Tour Operator Seeking Post-Transfer Growth	Growth and market development	New customer segments, digital marketing, partnerships, off-season offers

4. Assessment

Assessment Method	Description & Evidence
Short written reflection	Learners explain why customer trust and brand continuity matter during tourism SME succession. **Evidence**: Short reflection using a tourism SME example.
Customer continuity map	Learners identify key customer groups, brand assets and service elements to protect. **Evidence**: Completed customer and brand continuity map.
Digital presence checklist	Learners review digital assets, platform access, reviews, online listings and customer data. **Evidence**: Completed digital continuity checklist.
Transition communication plan	Learners prepare messages for customers and stakeholders. **Evidence**: Short communication plan with audience, message, timing and channel.
Work-based learning task	Learners apply the module to a real or simulated tourism SME. **Evidence**: Customer Continuity and First-Year Growth Plan.

5. Suggested Schedule

Total: 12–15 learning hours

Activity	Hours
Facilitated teaching/workshop	3
Group exercises and case studies	2
Independent reading/reflection	2
Work-based learning task	3–5
Assessment preparation/completion	2-3
Total Hours	**12 - 15**

6. Expected Module Learning Outcome

By the end of this module, learners will produce a Customer Continuity and First-Year Growth Plan for a tourism SME. This will outline key customer groups, brand elements to protect, digital channels to manage, transition communication messages, reputation risks, first-year priorities, growth opportunities and indicators for reviewing customer trust and visibility.

7. Resources & Learning Materials

Tourism marketing and digital presence

- **VisitBritain / VisitEngland – Digital Marketing Toolkit:** https://www.visitbritain.org/business-advice/how-market-your-business/digital-marketing-toolkit
- **How to be a successful tourism company online:** https://www.cbi.eu/market-information/tourism/how-be-successful-company-online
- **KPMG – Family Businesses in a Digital Era:** https://assets.kpmg.com/content/dam/kpmg/sg/pdf/2017/05/Family-Businesses-in-the-Digital-Economy.pdf
- **OECD – The Digital Transformation of SMEs:** https://www.oecd.org/content/dam/oecd/en/publications/reports/2021/02/the-digital-transformation-of-smes_ec3163f5/bdb9256a-en.pdf
- **Schönherr et al. (2024) - Exploring Generation Y's perception of family-run hotels: The perceived family firm image:** https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/13567667231178319
- **Zvanut & Baruca (2025) - Social Media Marketing Strategy in the Tourism Industry: A Systematic Literature Review:** https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/21568316.2025.2549069#abstract
- **Harvard Business Review – When being a Family becomes a competitive Advantage:** https://hbr.org/2026/01/when-being-a-family-business-becomes-a-competitive-advantage

7. Resources & Learning Materials

Videos or interviews with tourism business owners

- **Digital Marketing for Travel Agencies:** https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tSmKV73SQdQ
- **Tourism and Hospitality Marketing and Promotion:** https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hFF2y9Gvmds
- **Creating a Blue Ocean Strategy in the Travel Industry:** https://dianemolzan.medium.com/creating-a-blue-ocean-strategy-in-the-travel-industry-bdfbd96d751a
- **The Kano Model Explained:** https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vcnw5ohg8to

Work-based learning observation or guidelines

- **Government of the Netherlands - 10 tips to go digital in the tourism sector:** https://www.cbi.eu/market-information/tourism/tips-go-digital
- **Customer retention: Definition and best practices**: https://www.qualtrics.com/articles/customer-experience/customer-retention/
- **How Brand Management Has a Direct Impact on Your Bottom Line:** https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/brand-management
- **Understanding Hospitality Marketing:** https://www.mews.com/en/blog/hospitality-marketing
- **The Complete Guide to Blue Ocean Strategy:** https://www.blueoceanacademy.com/blue-ocean-strategy/?srsltid=AfmBOooEChynnN2Yg7ooftn9JsnD4SEoE2GWDjWCC8x8_PvNfAcGquSy
- **BCG – What is the Growth Share Matrix?** https://www.bcg.com/about/overview/our-history/growth-share-matrix
- **Destination BC – Introduction to the Net Promoter Score:** https://www.destinationbc.ca/content/uploads/2018/06/Introduction-to-NPS.pdf

Digital & Practical Tools

- **BCG Matrix Template:** https://miro.com/templates/bcg-matrix/
- **Ansoff Matrix Template**: https://miro.com/templates/ansoff-matrix/
- **Blue Ocean 4 Actions Framework:** https://miro.com/templates/four-actions-framework/
- **Customer Journey Map:** https://miro.com/templates/customer-journey-map231/
- **User Persona Template:** https://miro.com/templates/personas/

Keep **planning**,
keep **learning**,
and keep **strengthening**
the *future* of tourism SMEs
across Europe!

Next GEN Tourism Modular Curriculum for VET Educators

This curriculum is designed to support **VET providers, tourism SMEs, successors**, and **business support actors** in preparing for structured, inclusive, and sustainable business transitions.

This is only the starting point of the learning journey.

The modules provide a foundation for understanding **succession readiness, transition planning, ownership preparation, leadership handover, financial viability,** and **post-transition continuity**.

To continue the journey, learners and educators are encouraged to explore the wider **Next GEN Tourism resources**, including the **competence framework, training materials, practical tools, case studies, assessment application**, and **knowledge hub**.

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